

REMARKS**I. Intr ducti n**

Claims 33-35 and 104-107 were pending in the application. By way of the present reply, drawing informalities have been corrected. Claims 33-35 and 104-107 are respectfully submitted for reconsideration.

II. Drawings

The drawings were objected to for informalities. A "Proposed Changes to the Drawings" document is attached. Approval of the proposed drawing changes and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 34 and 104 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants have elected not to rewrite claims 34 and 104 into independent form because applicants believe claim 33, from which claims 34 and 104 depend, to be allowable for at least the reason set forth below. Accordingly, applicants submit that claims 34 and 104 are in condition for allowance without further amendment.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b) and 103(a)

Claims 33, 35, and 105-106 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Brown et al. (U.S. Patent No. 2,605,987). Claim 107 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Brown et al. Applicants traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Claim 33 defines a leg assembly for connecting a base to a tray of an activity center, where the leg assembly includes "a spring positioned between the sleeve and the slider and supporting the slider relative to the sleeve."

The Office Action states that Brown et al. shows "a spring (40) positioned between the sleeve [(23)] and the slider [(31)]." Applicants traverse the position stated in the Office Action. The coil spring 40 in Brown et al. is positioned *within* third section 31 and abuts shank 39 for manually urging or biasing shank 39 out of third section 31. See Brown et al., col. 2, lines 53-56. The spring 40 is not positioned *between* second

section 23 and third section 31. Thus, applicants submit that Brown et al. does not teach or suggest "a spring positioned between the sleeve and the slider and supporting the slider relative to the sleeve," as required by claim 33. For at least this reason, applicants traverse this §102(b) rejection of claim 33 and its dependent claim 35.

Claim 105 defines a leg assembly for connecting a base to a tray of an activity center. The leg assembly of claim 105 includes "a spring base mounted to the sleeve" and "a spring positioned between the spring base and the slider and supporting the slider relative to the spring base."

The Office Action states that "[a] spring base (32) is mounted to the sleeve (23)." Contrary to the characterization in the Office Action, element 32 in Brown et al. is a clamping lever, not a spring base. Clamping lever 32 is mounted for movement into and out of registry with spaced openings 35 in third section 31. See Brown et al., col. 2, lines 35-42. Moreover, whereas claim 105 requires "a spring positioned between the spring base and the slider," the coil spring 40 in Brown et al. is not positioned between clamping lever 32 and third section 31. Instead, as explained above, the coil spring 40 is positioned *within* third section 31 and abuts shank 39 for manually urging or biasing shank 39 out of third section 31. See Brown et al., col. 2, lines 53-56. Thus, applicants submit that Brown et al. does not teach or suggest "a spring base mounted to the sleeve" and "a spring positioned between the spring base and the slider and supporting the slider relative to the spring base," as required by claim 105. For at least this reason, applicants traverse this §102(b) rejection of claim 105 and its dependent claim 106. In addition, applicants submit that claim 107, which depends from claim 105, is patentable over Brown et al. for at least the same reason as claim 105.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above remarks and amendments, applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the examiner for the courtesies extended during the interview on December 19, 2002. If the examiner has any inquiries with respect to this application, applicants invite the examiner to direct those inquiries to the undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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